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The Honorable Daniel R. Elliott, III
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Dear Chairman Elliott:

In light of the Surface Transportation Board's scheduled June 22nd hearing on competition in the railroad industry, I am writing to express my support for maintaining a strong freight rail network in Arizona and across the country. It is important for any regulation of the freight rail industry to strike a proper balance to ensure that shippers and the railroads are both treated fairly.

Freight rail is a vital component of our nation's economic engine, transporting more than 43 percent of all intercity freight and moving a third of all U.S. goods and materials bound for export. Arizona is served by nine rail operators that operate more than 1,700 miles of track, employ nearly 3,000 workers, and transport more than 31.2 million tons of freight annually to and from the state. Further, numerous companies in my state depend on the railroads to provide a safe, dependable, and economical mode of transport to bring in raw materials and to ship finished goods to markets across the country and, ultimately, around the world.

As the Board examines the existing regulatory framework of the freight rail industry and considers possible changes, I urge you to take a reasonable and balanced approach that provides shippers with reliable service at a fair price and the railroads with the ability to continue to improve and build out their rail networks.

I appreciate your consideration of my views on this important matter.

Sincerely,



JON KYL

United States Senator